SAFE EATING GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANT WOMEN. WOMEN WHO MAY BECOME PREGNANT. **NURSING MOTHERS AND** CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OLD

Freshwater fish caught in streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds in Massachusetts.....



DO NOT EAT

Fish that are stocked in streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds in Massachusetts.....

SAF TO EAT

Cod. Haddock, Flounde and Pollock in larger amounts......SAFE TO EAT

Lobster from New Bedford Harbor......DO NOT EAT

Swordfish, Shark, King Mackerel, Tilefish, and Tuna Steak.....

DO NOT EAT

Bluefish caught off the Massachusetts coast. .DO NOT EAT

Lobsters, flounder soft-shell clams and bivalves from Boston Harbor......DO NOT EAT

SAFE EATING GUIDELINES FOR EVERYONE Fish and Shellfish from the inner areas of New Bedford Harbor......DO NOT EAT

Lobster Tomalley.

DO NOT EAT

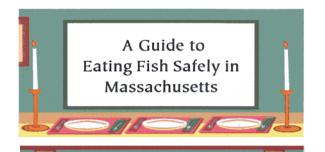
For more information on how to choose fish that are safe to eat contact:

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health **Bureau of Environmental** Health Assessment 250 Washington Street, 7th fl Boston, MA 02108

or call us at: 617-624-5757

or you can visit our website at: http://www.state.ma.us/dph/beha

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The Massachusetts Department of Public Health ALERTS pregnant women to the possible dangers of eating fish caught in Massachusetts streams, rivers, lakes, ponds and some coastal waters.

We advise that pregnant women, nursing mothers and women who may become pregnant DO NOT EAT any fish from these freshwater bodies or certain fish and shellfish caught in some Massachusetts coastal waters.

Children under 12 years old are also at risk and SHOULD NOT EAT these fish.

A VARIED DIET, INCLUDING SAFE FISH. WILL LEAD TO GOOD **NUTRITION AND BETTER** HEALTH.

REMEMBER FISH IS GOOD FOR YOU! CHOOSE FISH THAT ARE SAEE TO EAT!

What is Unsafe About The Fish and Shellfish Listed in This Advisory?

These fish and shellfish may contain chemicals that can harm you and your baby's health. This advisory does not apply to fish stocked in lakes and ponds.

What Chemicals Are They?

Mercury and PCBs are the primary contaminants of concern. Mercury is a naturally occuring metal found in the environment. However, mercury is also released by burning trash or burning coal for fuel. Once released into the air it can travel long distances and be deposited on soil and in water bodies. PCBs are man-made chemicals that were banned in the 1970s. However, due to their widespread use, PCBs can still be found in our environment and get into our food.

How Do Chemicals and Metals Get into the Fish?

Chemicals and metals get into the fish from pollution in the water and sediments where they live. Larger species feed on smaller species and the process of bioaccumulation begins. Bioaccumulation means that the chemicals or metals concentrate in the fish. The larger, older fish concentrate the most chemicals.

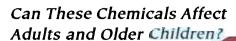


How Do Theses Chemicals Affect Health?

Developing fetuses, nursing babies, and young children are affected by mercury. Small amounts can damage a brain even before birth. High levels of mercury can affect how well children learn, think, behave, and develop later in life. Children who have been exposed to mercury in the womb can experience symptoms even if their mothers do not. PCBs can also affect developing fetuses, nursing babies, and young children.

Is There a Way of Cleaning or Cooking the Fish to Get Rid of the Chemicals?

Remove the skin, any fatty material and dark meat from the fish before cooking. Broil the fish instead of frying it to allow as much fat as possible to be drained away. However, if the fish contains mercury, there is no way to clean or remove the chemical. It can't be cut, cleaned or cooked out.



Yes. At higher levels, adults and older children can experience health effects from these chemicals. Some of these chemicals can affect memory or behavior. They can make your skin tingle or feel numb. Some are also suspected of causing liver problems and some types of cancer.

Should My Family and I Stop Eating Fish Altogether?

No. Absolutely NOT. Fish is good for you and your family. It is a good source of protein and low in fat. It may also protect you against heart disease. If you may become pregnant or are pregnant or nursing, you and your children under 12 years old may safely eat 12 ounces (about 2 meals) per week of fish or shellfish not covered in this advisory. Otherwise, it is important to follow the Safe Eating Guidelines included in this advisory.

Can I Eat Canned Tuna?

"Light" tuna as opposed to "Chunk White" tuna (also called albacore) has been shown to contain lesser amounts of mercury. Consumers should eat no more than 12 ounces per week. Very small children, including toddlers, should eat less.